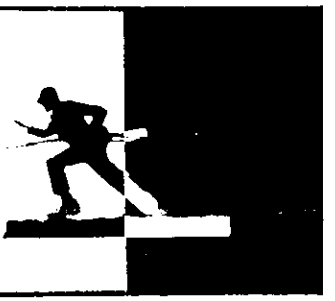
PROFESSIONAL FORUM



Infantry Issues and Lessons

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In observing and studying major training exercises such as REFORGER, Bright Star, Crested Eagle, and National Training Center (NTC) rotations, many Army tacticians have noted—in addition to sound applications of doctrine, tactics, and techniques--numerous examples of recurring operational problems. The following are a few examples:

- Security of the brigade support area (BSA).
- The planning and execution of fire support for both sustainment and rear area operations of heavy maneuver brigades.
- Reconnaissance and counter-reconnaissance operations.
- Defeating or defending against enemy attack helicopters in mid-to-high-intensity environments.
- The breaching of minefields under fire.
- Limited visibility operations.
- The use of navigation aids such as ground surveillance radar, visible light markers, or guides.
- Coordination between the fire support officer and the air liaison officer.

The root deficiencies in these and other problem areas may lie in doctrine, training, materiel, organization, and leadership concepts or techniques; or they may result from poor unit training, planning, or execution. Regardless of the cause, the fact that the same problems often seem to occur over and over is a strong indication that units do not learn as much from the experiences of other units as may be possible. In other words, we fail to make the most of the lessons others have learned from their failures or their victories.

We should not overly chastise ourselves, however, because no system has been readily available to provide us with timely feedback on lessons learned. As a result, our learning too often has been based largely upon stale information.

The Army's leadership noted this need for a current source of feedback about operations, and the initial response was the formation of the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL), at Fort Leavenworth. The Center was given the mission of developing and distributing combat-relevant lessons learned throughout the Army.

In support of its mission, CALL has developed three main ways of distributing lessons learned to the field--two publications, *Lessons Learned Bulletin* and *NTC Newsletter,* and a telephone modem-accessible management information system called "Army Lessons Learned Management Information System" (ALLMIS).

All three of these sources are valuable. Despite an extensive distribution effort on the part of the Center, however, most of the company and battalion level leaders questioned in a recent survey had little or no knowledge of them. Likewise, a check with the system administrator for the Army Lessons Learned Management Information System revealed that few TOE units (in fact, not even all of the TRADOC branch schools) have established log-on privileges with this computer system, often because the necessary modem was not available.

To help fill at least a portion of the void, the Directorate of Evaluation and Standardization at the Infantry School has developed a software package that runs on IBM PC-compatible computers. The software, called the Infantry Issues and Lessons Learned Analysis System (I^2L^2AS), is currently being used at the Infantry School by trainers and developers of equipment and doctrine. It provides a current source of unclassified, Infantry-related observations and issues from NTC rotations, major exercises, military operations, special events, unit initiatives, historical sources, and TRADOC-sanctioned unit visits. The user-friendly software package provides easily understood menus to help a user find information pertaining to a particular subject area.

Menu options in the software system

allow the user to conduct a screen review of keyword lists--either a master keyword list or more succinct listings of keywords determined by the user from "functional areas" (leadership, doctrine, training, organization, and materiel) or "mission areas" (command and control, close combat light, close combat heavy, fire support, air defense, communications, intelligence and electronic warfare, NBC, combat service support, aviation, special operations forces, combat arms, combat support, military police). Up to five keywords are assigned to each listing to help identify the information contained in it.

Once the user has identified the keywords that pertain to his subject area, they are then used to conduct searches of the database. Entries found by these keywords are presented on the computer screen for review. (An example of the I²L²AS output is shown in the accompanying figure.) Further information is available from subject matter experts who can be reached at the telephone numbers (usually AUTOVON) listed on the screen.

The hardware required to run this program is a standard personal computer being purchased throughout the Army: IBM PC-compatible computer, with 512k memory (minimum), 10 megabyte hard-disk drive, 5¼-inch floppy disk drive, and printer (optional).

The software is available to infantry units, battalion level or higher, in the Active Army, Army National Guard, or Army Reserve, and is mailed only to unit addresses. A unit requesting the software must mail ten blank floppy disks (5¼-inch) to Commandant, U.S. Army Infantry School, ATTN: ATSH-ES, Fort Benning, GA 31905-5420. Questions regarding these procedures may be directed to the Infantry Hotline, AUTOVON 835-7693, or commercial (404) 545-7693.

Once a unit is established on the I²L²AS user file at the School, it will automatically receive software updates by mail.

The Infantry Issues and Lessons Learned Analysis System serves as a current source of previously unavailable Infantry-related lessons learned. The desire of the Infantry School is to improve the quantity and quality of professional information available to the Infantry community by enabling soldiers to learn from the experiences of others and develop into a more combat-ready infantry force.

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                    OBSERVATION #:  1336
        INFANTRY ISSUES & LESSONS LEARNED ANALYSIS SYSTEM (I2L2AS)

OBSERVATION DATE: 05/08/87
EXERCISE/EVENT: NATIONAL TRAINING CENTER (NTC)
SUMMARY: SOME SUCCESSFUL TECHNIQUES OR PROCEDURES TO OPTIMIZE DESTRUCTION
         (TARGET EFFECT) ON THE ENEMY FOLLOW: MINIMIZE MOVING TARGET
         ENGAGEMENTS BY MASSING FIRES IN COORDINATION WITH ENGAGEMENT AREAS
         FORMED BY THE REINFORCING TERRAIN AND OBSTACLES.  ALWAYS PLAN
         ILLUMINATION AND SMOKE MISSIONS (DAY AND NIGHT).  OBSERVERS MUST
         DEVELOP TERRAIN SKETCHES IN THE DEFENSE.  ADJUST ILLUMINATION IN
         THE DAYTIME.  STRESS COORDINATION BETWEEN THE SUPPORTED MANEUVER
         COMMANDER AND FIST PERSONNEL.  MASS FIRES WHENEVER POSSIBLE TO
         ENSURE MAXIMUM EFFECTS WHEN ATTACKING TARGETS WITH A MINIMUM
         EXPENDITURE OF AMMUNITION AND REDUCE THE FIRING UNIT'S
         VULNERABILITY TO ENEMY TARGET ACQUISITION.  ESTABLISH AN IPB
         DECISION POINT TO ENGAGE THEIR MOVING TARGET.  ENSURE THAT THE FIRE
         SUPPORT PLAN, IS BRIEFED AT COMPANY/PLATOON OPORDS.


DOC ID: NTC LESSONS LEARNED COMMANDERS COMMENTS, THE CS TEAM, 8 MAY 87
PHONE: AV 552-2255                                          PAGE: 5
BACKUP DOCUMENTATION: CATA, CALL          Press Shift PrtSc to Print
Do You Wish to Continue Search? (Y/N)
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Eric J. Lynam, at the time the system was developed, was Chief, Standardization Branch, Analysis Division in the same directorate.

Equipment Discipline

LIEUTENANT DANIEL F. SULLIVAN

While many units have well-established standing operating procedures (SOPs) for equipment accountability and maintenance, not all units practice and enforce those procedures. Too often, equipment maintenance and accountability is taken for granted, and leaders usually do not get excited when something as small as a